

Commerce And Industry Samuel G Smith Hillsboro.W.Va.Pocahontas Co.

with a rapid fall from its source to the Glades and from there on follows a very slow sluggish course,a dam could be constructed near the head forming a large basin of several hundred acres a water supply that could furnish electricity to the entire Little Levels District.Williams River heads on the west side of Day and Swago Mountain,this is another of Pocahontas Countys streams that can be harnessed and put to work but ~~like~~ it like many of our other streams lays back in almost a wilderness and due to lack of roads has not been opened up and should have a great future in store.

Many of Pocahontas County streams furnished power for the pioneer to grind corn,run Tilt-Hammers and our old Up & Down saw mills .

Mills run by electricity is the Marlinton mill ,run by gas engines the Dunmore Mill and the Hillsboro mill the rest are run by water power.
George Williams of near Lobelia has erected a small corn mill that serves Lobelia and surrounding terretory,John P Sharp also has a small corn mill up in what is known as the brush country.

The water-power development in Pocahontas County is in its infancy but where ever it has been developed this particular section has grown and today we find where milling is done the population is larger,stores and post-offices have come in until they are community centers.

Information-G.W Price Marlinton.W.Va.J.O Morrison Marlinton W.Va.

W.Va. Geological Survey by Paul Price.

West Virginia Writers' Project
RESEARCH IDENTIFICATION REPORT

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Subject Pocahontas County history Date May 22, 1941

Research Worker Juanita S. Dilley Date ~~Research~~ Taken May 22

Typist Juanita S. Dilley Date Typed May 22, 1941

Source Pocahontas Times, Feb. 8, 1940 Date Filed
by Norman K. Price



Railroad

Editor Calvin W. Princes recent sound off on the radio from New York brings a letter from Mr. Robert Earle of Marion, Kansas, with reminiscences of the building of the Greenbrier Railway in 1899. He was a foreman with the J. J. Strang Company the first contractor who arrived in September, 1899; pitched their camp of nine army tents salvaged from the recent Spanish American war, and began operations a mile below Marlinton at the Kee Place on Still House Run (now Stillwell), running into a lot of rattle snakes and copper-heads the first day in the jungles.

There was a fine outfit of big Missouri mules and draft horses to operate the plows and scrapers. This being before the days of steam shovels, and the crew was mainly colored men recruited for the duration of the job in North Carolina and Virginia, who were held in a sort of benevolent subjection until such time as it pleased the management to let them settle with the quartermaster and return whence they came. Incidentally, the bosses and many of the laborers carried guns. (Note- I have always heard it said that men were often shot, but they were just buried and no questions asked.)

Mr. Earle says that so far as he is aware he is the only one now living of Strang's foremen and bosses, and he is living in retirement from construction work. All of the others seem to have met with some more or less violent ends.

Strang was killed in a runaway accident in New Jersey;

wels Engstrom died in a straight jacket in Cleveland; Dan Foley died in Kansas City; Bob Vanstan was last heard of in Pittsburg in 1920; Mike Golden dropped his gun on the floor down in Oklahoma and it went off and killed him. Mike Calvin was killed in the Philippines. These men are remembered by the older inhabitants hereabouts who worked on the building of the railroad.

The editor's brother, who was at that time working on the paper, is a witness to the snake killing referred to by Mr. Earle, and dissected out one of the big ones for his museum of natural history." N. R. P.

from---Pocahontas Times, Feb. 8, 1940

by Norman R. Price